



# ***The Communicator***

*An interagency newsletter for Greater Boston Federal employees*

10 Causeway Street, Room 1075, Boston, MA 02222

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<http://www.boston.feb.gov>

**January 2002**

## **A Note From the Chair**



Happy New Year from all of us at the Greater Boston Federal Executive Board. 2001 was indeed a banner year for the local Federal community. We raised more than \$2 million for the Combined Federal Campaign in 2000 and are well on our way to surpassing those numbers this year. Many of our regional political appointees are in place and we are excited for the widespread support we have experienced from the Bush Administration already. We are also pleased to now have the Federal law enforcement community represented on our Board of Directors to compliment our mix of military, civilian and postal Federal executives who work for you.

Plans are already underway for a number of our 2002 programs. As you've heard, local Federal agencies came together for the second annual *After School Resources Fair* in 2001 and helped more than 600 youth and after school workers gain access to valuable Federal assistance. We are working with the City of Boston to coordinate our third annual event for February 8 at Northeastern University. Contact us for more complete details. Our annual report will be released later this month and we look forward to sharing all of our successes from the past year with you.

## **Diane P. LeBlanc**

Nomination packets are now available for the GBFEB's 2002 Support

Personnel Awards Program. Postmaster – Boston Mike Powers will chair the event, one of our most popular, scheduled for *Friday, April; 12, 2002*. Be sure to take advantage of this unique opportunity to recognize the “best and the brightest” among support, administrative and clerical staff in your agency. The event typically sells out so please get nominations in early.

The Federal Executive Board is proud of our local Federal employees and always embraces the opportunity to acknowledge those who routinely go above and beyond the call of duty. In addition to the Support Awards Program, look forward to the annual Excellence in Government Awards program on May 8, a host of events in celebration of Public Service Recognition Week, Diversity Day and more.

### ***REMEMBERING***

#### **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an African American clergyman, is considered a great American because of his tireless efforts to win civil rights for all people through nonviolent means. Since his assassination in 1968, memorial services have marked his birthday on January 15. In 1986, that day was replaced by the third Monday of



January, which was declared a national holiday.

### **UPDATE ON FEEA WTC/PENTAGON FUND**

The Federal Employees Education and Assistance Fund's WTC/Pentagon Fund is helping families affected by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Immediate financial assistance was provided on-site at the Pentagon Family Assistance Center from September 12 - October 10, with additional assistance provided via telephone during and since that time. To date, FEEA has supported families with more than \$250,000 for travel expenses, mortgages, utility bills, funerals, and more. FEEA continues to field requests for general financial assistance and is also committed to assisting victims' families with educational expenses in the years to come.

The FEEA Pentagon Scholarship Program will provide a full college scholarship to any child who lost a civilian Federal employee parent in the attack on the Pentagon. Children whose parent was critically injured are also eligible for the program, as are victims' spouses who were already attending college on September 11. Spouses wishing to return to college will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Registration forms are available on FEEA's web site, <http://www.feea.org>.

### **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

Applications for FEEA's 2002-03 scholarship program were included in the Winter issue of FEEA's newsletter, in late December. Beginning in early January, the application will also be



available  
for

download from their web site.

The MA BAY CFC's "Mega Raffle" helped raise thousands of additional dollars to benefit the 2001 Campaign. Drawn on December 14 at the O'Neill Federal Building, there were more than 90 winners from among the Federal ranks. Congratulations to all of the winners and thank you for your support.

To view a complete list of prizes and winners as well as Campaign totals and more, view the CFC web site at [http:// www.massbaycfc.org](http://www.massbaycfc.org)

### **SAVE THE DATE**

Agency managers, key workers, eagle donors, supporters and friends of the Massachusetts Bay Combined Federal Campaign are invited to our annual **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION CEREMONY** on **Tuesday, February 26, 2002**. Ask your CFC Executive for details. Space is limited so please RSVP early.

### **SUPPORT PERSONNEL AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED**

GBFEB Chair Diane LeBlanc and Vice Chair Mike Powers will host the GBFEB's annual Support Personnel Awards Program on Friday, April 12, 2002 at Boston's Park Plaza Hotel. Nomination forms are attached.

Visit our web site at [www.boston.feb.gov](http://www.boston.feb.gov) or call 617/565-8342 for more information. **THE EVENT WILL SELL OUT EARLY.**

## **Thrift Savings Plan Open Season**

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season began November 15, 2001 and ends January 31, 2002. This Open Season is particularly significant for you because the changes in the program for 2002 allow you to increase your contribution.

### **Increases in maximum contributions amounts by 1%**

FERS employees may elect to contribute up to 12% of the basic pay they earn each pay period; CSRS employees may elect to contribute up to 7% of the basic pay they earn for the pay period. The total amount you contribute will continue to be capped by the IRS at \$11,000 for 2002. In 2003, FERS employees may elect to contribute up to 13% of the basic pay they earn each pay period; CSRS employees may elect to contribute up to 8%.

### **How to make a contribution election or increase your contribution**

- *Submit Form TSP-1*, Election Form, to your agency Human Resources Office. Forms may be downloaded from the TSP website at [www.tsp.gov/forms/ifforms.html](http://www.tsp.gov/forms/ifforms.html).

- You may enroll and adjust your allocations in the *Employee Express* (automated system that allows Federal employees to make changes to certain discretionary personnel and payroll data without using paper forms) website at [www.employeeexpress.gov/emain.htm](http://www.employeeexpress.gov/emain.htm).

### **How to make an investment election**

You may invest in any of the five TSP investment funds. To change the investment of future contributions to your TSP account, you must request a **contribution allocation**. To change the investment of money already in your account, you must request an **interfund transfer**.

To request a contribution allocation or an interfund transfer, use the TSP Website at [www.tsp.gov/account/index.html](http://www.tsp.gov/account/index.html), the Thriftline

(508) 255-8777, or Form TSP-50, Investment Allocation. Form TSP-50's are mailed directly to the TSO office in New Orleans, LA. A contribution allocation request will generally be effective no later than 2 business days after it is received. Interfund transfer requests must be received by the fifteenth of the month for the interfund to be effective as of the end of the month.

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/payrates/index.htm>.

#### **Where to get more information**

The booklet, Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees, describes the TSP in detail and contains more information about contribution elections, contribution allocations and interfund transfers. The latest version of the booklet is dated May 2001. This booklet is on the TSP website and is available from your Human Resources Office upon request.

The flyer "TSP Highlights" November 2001 contains basic information about this TSP open season, presents historical rates of return of the TSP investment funds and also includes the new transfer option and new loan information on the web. This flyer is available at: [www.tsp.gov/forms/ochigh0111.pdf](http://www.tsp.gov/forms/ochigh0111.pdf).

If you have additional questions about the TSP, contact your Human Resources Office.

#### **2002 Salary Rates**

President Bush, in an Executive order issued by the White House late in December, boosted pay rates for the government's white-collar employees, senior executives and others. The order will give Federal employees nationwide a 3.6 percent increase and provide a separate locality pay raise that will vary by metropolitan area.

Specific salary information can be accessed on OPM's web site at

**Wanted: Enthusiastic Federal  
Employees to share their  
government experience**

The Partnership for Public Service, a nonprofit group dedicated to improving the government's recruitment and retention record, is creating a national speakers bureau comprised of mostly career employees to discuss their experience in the Federal government at colleges and universities across the country.

The nonprofit group has asked the nation's 28 Federal Executive Boards to identify public servants in their areas who would make suitable speakers. The idea is to have career employees of various ages and experience levels talk to young people about the service opportunities government offers, according to Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service.

"We have spoken with career counselors at public policy schools across the country, and they are unanimously interested in creating a forum where students hear from Federal employees," Stier said. Many Federal employees are interested in sharing their experience and promoting public service too, according to Stier.

"Most want to participate and share their experience, and see this opportunity as a great way of doing that," he said. "I don't imagine we will have any difficulty in getting people to participate." Participants volunteer to speak and are not paid for their work," Stier said.

Stier said the Partnership for Public Service is trying to jumpstart a dialogue between government employees and young people interested in pursuing careers in public service. "One of the things we saw after Sept. 11 was a rising

confidence in government, but not an overall interest in Federal jobs."

The speakers bureau would also include noncareer government leaders and people with experience in public service who work in business, academia and the nonprofit sector. But the bulk of the speakers would come from the career ranks, Stier said.

The program is in the planning stages, but the Partnership for Public Service is making a big push next year to get it up and running, Stier said.

"Well-run organizations in the private sector ensure that their motivated employees are on the front lines of recruiting," Stier said. Having Federal employees go out and talk to people about the benefits of public service helps agencies "put their best foot forward," he said.

Federal employees interested in finding out more about the speakers bureau can e-mail the Partnership for Public Service at [mmasters@ourpublicservice.org](mailto:mmasters@ourpublicservice.org) or contact the GBFEB.

**AFTER SCHOOL RESOURCE  
FAIR**

The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board, in cooperation with the City of Boston and Parents United for Child Care, will host the third annual AFTER SCHOOL RESOURCES FAIR on *Friday, February 8, 2002 from 9am - 12pm at Northeastern University's Curry Student Center*. The event will feature Ms. Karen Pittman, Executive Director of the Forum for Youth Investment, and offer After School providers and Youth Workers the opportunity to learn about a variety of Federal, state, local and non-profit resources available to assist them.

Contact Shirley Furr for more  
information at 617/565-8342 or  
[shirley.furr@gsa.gov](mailto:shirley.furr@gsa.gov).

## **PRESIDENT BUSH PROCLAIMS**

### ***National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day***

*From White House Proclamation  
available on [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)*

On the morning of December 7, 1941, America was attacked without warning at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by the air and naval forces of Imperial Japan. More than 2,400 people perished and another 1,100 were wounded, triggering our entry into World War II.

On December 7, 2001, America honored those killed 60 years ago and those who survived to fight on other fronts in the four succeeding years of world war. We also remembered the millions of brave Americans who answered our country's call to the battlefield, to the factory, and to the farm, remembering Pearl Harbor by their deeds, their devotion to duty, and their willingness to fight for freedom. The attack at Pearl Harbor fired the American spirit with a determination that freedom would not fall to tyranny; and the United States and its allies fought to victory, preserving a world in which democracy could grow. The tragedy of December 7, 1941, remains seared upon our collective national memory, a recollection that serves not just as a symbol of American military valor and American resolve, but also as a reminder of the presence of evil in the world and the need to remain ever vigilant against it.

Now, another date will forever stand alongside December 7 --



September 11, 2001. On that day, our people and our way of life again were brutally and suddenly attacked, though not by a complex military maneuver, but by the surreptitious wiles of evil terrorists who took cruel and heartless advantage of the freedoms guaranteed by our Nation. Their target was not chiefly our military, but innocent civilians. We fight now to defend freedom, secure civilization, and ensure the survival of our American way of life.

As we fight to defend what we believe is right, we remember the sacrifice of those who have gone before us -- not only the heroes of Pearl Harbor but all the men and women of the greatest of generations who defeated tyranny. We are grateful for their service, and honor it by pledging to do our best to secure for our children, our

grandchildren, and all of posterity the continuing blessings of liberty.

The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, designated December 7, 2001, as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

### IN REMEMBRANCE

A Boston IRS employee injured by falling debris during the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on New York's World Trade Center died Tuesday, December 11 at Massachusetts General Hospital.

David Bernard, 57, died from the massive injuries he sustained after being struck by falling debris when American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center on Sept. 11. Bernard was transferred from New York to the Boston hospital in early December and died three months to the day after the attack.

### OPM selects Long Term Care Contractor

The Office of Personnel Management recently announced the contractor that will run the government's long-term care insurance program for Federal workers, military personnel and retirees.

*Metropolitan Life and John Hancock insurance companies* teamed up to win the contract, which will provide discounted long-term care insurance to up to 20 million Federal employees and retirees, military personnel and retirees and their families. While OPM has estimated that discounts on the insurance would be 15 percent to 20 percent below premiums available in the commercial market, the agency said that premiums would be "below those

generally available in the private market" and would be announced by February.

The contractors' joint venture, known as Long Term Care Partners LLC, will begin marketing and offering long-term care coverage by October. An early enrollment period will likely take place in February, when people who know they want the coverage immediately can sign up. Visit [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) for details.

**WELCOME:** The Drug Enforcement Administration's New England Field Division recently appointed Special Agent *Thomas P. Pasquarello* as acting Special Agent in Charge. Pasquarello was the Assistant Special Agent in Charge for Connecticut and Boston

District Offices and replaces Vincent Mazzilli who retired in December. He will be acting SAC until a permanent SAC is appointed.

**FAREWELL:** to Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services / HHS Regional Administrator *George Jacobs* who retired early this year

## **New England Region Opens EPA Laboratory in Chelmsford, MA**

The Environmental Protection Agency, in cooperation with GSA, hosted a grand opening ceremony to celebrate the completion of EPA's New England Regional Laboratory in North Chelmsford, Massachusetts. Speakers included GSA Regional Administrator Dennis R. Smith, EPA Regional Administrator Robert W. Varney, Chelmsford Town Manager Bernard Lynch, and representatives from the Green Building Round Table, Acquest Development and Erland Construction Company. The 66,000-square-foot leased facility is powered entirely from renewable energy sources making the building at least 35 percent more energy-efficient than labs of comparable size.

### **PMI Assessment Centers**

More than 400 *Presidential Management Intern* candidates from across New England are expected to be interviewed in Boston starting in mid-January. During the day-long panel interviews, candidates participate in individual and group presentations as well as written exercises. The prestigious program admits graduate and law students for a two year management training program within a government agency. Following the two year assignment, PMIs are eligible for non-competitive conversion to the GS 12 level.

For more information on the PMI program or if you are interested in serving on the interview panels,



please contact OPM's Lee Willis at 781/582-3991 or [clwillis@opm.gov](mailto:clwillis@opm.gov).

### **Frequent Flier Legislation**

(from Government Executive 12/14/01)

President Bush recently signed into law the Defense Department authorization measure that allows Federal employees to use frequent flier miles earned on government travel. The amendment was included in the fiscal 2002 Defense Authorization, which passed on December 13 and was signed December 27.

Senators Joe Lieberman (D-CT) and John Warner (R-VA) added the amendment arguing that allowing Federal employees to keep their frequent flier miles would help Federal recruitment and retention efforts.

The long-awaited employee benefit allows civil service, military and Foreign Service employees to use frequent flier miles obtained on government travel for personal use. The benefit is retroactive, allowing Federal employees to use miles earned prior to the bill's enactment. Details are still being worked out. Look here for details in the future.

Previously, Federal employees were not allowed to use their frequent flier miles because of the 1994 Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (Public Law 103-355) which prohibited Federal employees from accepting promotional items they received while traveling at government expense.

GSA has issued a travel advisory to addressing FAQs related to the new benefit available on GSA's web site at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

### **DIVERSITY COMMITTEE TO HOST FIRST MEETING JANUARY 9**

The GBFEB is still accepting nominations for the 2002 Diversity Committee. Chair Carol Stender-Larkin has developed an aggressive agenda and is requesting that you help develop a core group of key employees from a variety of professions and cultural backgrounds to be effective. All nominations

must be endorsed by your agency's senior-most official and will be accepted at the discretion of the Chair. Contact us for more information at 617/565-8342.

### **Bush Administration announces latest Political Appointments**

Jeffrey Butland, a former state senator from Maine, was appointed regional administrator in Region I to oversee the U.S. *Small Business Administration's* programs and services in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

Butland, an operational planner for retailer L.L. Bean, has worked for the company at its Maine headquarters in Freeport since 1984. Prior to working for L.L. Bean, Butland was self-employed in the construction industry. He served on the town council in Cumberland, Maine, during the mid-1980s before running successfully for the Maine House of Representatives in 1987. He served in the House for four years until he was elected to the Maine Senate where he served until 1998, including a term as president of the Senate from 1994 to 1996.

Butland is a native of Maine. He chaired the state's Bush/Cheney Steering Committee and was a member of the Bush/Cheney Campaign Executive Committee in Maine. He graduated from Bates College with a bachelor's degree in government and served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1972-76 and in the reserves from 1977-94.

President Bush appointed Mr. Kevin Keough, a native of CT, as the Secretary's Regional Representative for the *US Department of Housing and Urban Development* on December 26,

2001. Biographical information will be available next month.

## **NARA Offers Vital Records Management Briefing**

*"Sadly, one of the many lessons we have learned from the recent attacks on America is that we must now be prepared for the unexpected. As leaders of the Federal government, it is our duty to ensure that our agencies are prepared for even the most unlikely threat. The Government must continue to function and provide services to the public under emergency operating conditions and resume normal business afterward. It is imperative that the information needed by the government be readily available both to assist in recovery and ensure the continuity of operations.*

*To ensure that the government can respond immediately following a disaster, it is essential that your agency have an active disaster preparedness and recovery program for the records needed to provide essential government services and protect legal rights."*  
*--John Carlin, Archivist of the United States*

NARA's Northeast Region is offering FREE vital records and disaster preparedness training for Federal managers throughout the Northeast Region. SAVE THE DATE for the first in the series.

**January 15, 2001**  
**JFK Federal Building, Room**  
**E275B**  
**Boston, MA**  
**11:30 – 2pm**  
*Bring your lunch*

**To register, please call NARA at  
781/647-8104.**

## **GSA continues to expand PREMIER LODGING PROGRAM**

***Guaranteed Rooms!  
Guaranteed Rates!  
Right where you need to be!***

*These are the underlying concepts of the  
PLP*

With the PLP, the Government contracts with individual lodging properties in specific geographical areas to provide Federal travelers with a guaranteed minimum of rooms at a contract rate that is at or below the Per Diem rate.

After a pilot in Boston, the FPLP has opened in Denver, and Chicago. New York, Washington DC, Portland, Seattle, and Baltimore will be following shortly. The balance of the top 75 travel destinations will be covered by the second quarter of 2002. GSA is working with Federal Executive Boards and Associations across the country to identify the specific areas within these 75 destinations where the program is most needed.

### **STATUS OF BOSTON'S CONTRACT RENEWAL**

GSA's Office of Governmentwide Policy expects to issue a new solicitation for the Boston area in early January 2002. Visit GSA's web site at: [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) for more complete information about current contracts in place nationwide, status of future solicitations and per diem rates across the country.